(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the response of State Governments in this regard particularly that of Bihar?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRI YOGENDER K. ALAGH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Government of India have formulated a Common Minimum National Action Plan for Power based on the consensus reached in the Chief Ministers Conferences held on 16-10-1996 and 3.12.1996. The Action plan has bten circulated to all the State Governments for its implementaion in a time bound manner. The Action Plan *inter-alia* provides for giving maximum possible autonomy to the State Electricity Boards and improvements in their management practices and physical parameters.

(c) The Government of Orissa have already restructured their Electricity Sector by enactment of an Act i.e. Orissa Electricity Reforms Act, 1995. The Government of Haryana have recently passed a Bill for undertaking reforms and restructuring in their power sector. The Government of Rajasthan is also likely to pass a similar bill very shortly. The other States like Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh Karnataka, Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh, Assam, Kerala; Maharashtra, West Bengal and Bihar have also initiated action for undertaking reform and restructuring in their power sector. The Government of Bihar had appointed a Consultant to conduct a diagnosite study of their power sector. Phase.I of the recommendations of the Consultant have been accepted and draft policy paper on reforms is being considered by the Government. They are also working on modalities of framing of reform legislation which includes creation of generation, transmission and distribution companies and establishment of Electricity Regulatory Commission (ERC).

Setting up of Power Regulatory Commission

2111. DR. ALLADI P. RAJKUMAR: Will the MINISTER OF POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are contemplating setting up a Power Regulatory Commission to seek better cooperation of the private sector towards augmenting the power capacity in the country;

(b) if so, the details of the proposed commission, including its structure and powers; and

(c) other measures being contemplated to improve production transmission and distribution systems?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRI YOGENDER K. ALAGH): (a) and (b) It is roposed to set up a Central Electricity Regulitory Commission (CERC) at the National level and State Electricity Regulatory Commission (SERC) at State level for rationalisation of tariff and matters incidental thereto. The CERC shall consist of a Chairperson and a maximum of 4 other members. The SERC would consist of a maximum of 3 members. The Chairman and Members of both the commissions would be appointed from the persons selected by Independent Selection Committees constituted for the purpose. The members of both the Commissions would hold office for a period of 5 years from the date of their appointment or until the age of 62 years whichever is earlier.

Both the Commissions will enjoy powers as are vested in Civil Courts under the Court of Civil Procedure for enforcement of their decisions, directions and orders. Appeals against the orders of the Central Commission would lie in the High Court and in the case of State Commission would lie with the Central Electricity Regulatory Commission (CERC).

(c) The Government of India have formulated a Common Minimum National Action Plan for Power based on the consensus reached in the Chief Ministers' Conferences held on 16.10.1996 and 3.12.1996. The Action Plan has been circulated to all the State Governments for its implementation in a time bound manner. The Action Plan inter-alia provides for delegation of more powers to in State agencies, autonomy to the State Electricity Boards, improvement in management practices of State Electricity Boards, provision of higher alocations for public sector projects, emphasis on renovation and modernisation, improvement in plant load factor, private sector participation in distribution, encouragement of co-generation/captive power plants, development of mega power projects at mine pit heads, both in public and private sector, with transmission facilities for evacuation of power to other regions/States. The Ninth Plan which is under finalisation also proposes substantial investment in generation, transmission and distribution of power.

Hydel Power Policy

2112. SHRI GYAN RANJAN: Will tht Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Samghamoorthy Committee has given its recommendations for formulating a comprehensive policy on hydel;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) details of action taken thereon; and

(d) the present status of new Hydel Power Policy?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRI YOGINDER K. ALAGH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The main recommendations of Sambamurti Committee are:

(i) The Hydro potential which is concentrated in a few regions should be ressessed and txploited.

(ii) Public Sector should primarily undertake large and multi-purpose projects and private sector should concentrate on smaller projects.

(iii) Memorandum of Understanding route should be adopted in the case of complex hydro projects.

(iv) International Competitive bidding route should be adopted in the case of smaller and less complex projects and based on unit power/energy cost.

(v) Joint Ventures of Public Sector and Private Sector should be encouraged.

(vi) Additional incentives for hydro projects should be given so that return on hydro is made comparable to thermal projects.

(vii) Peaking power should be allowed additional returns.

(viii) Special emphasis should be given to hydro potential in North East.

(ix) A Hydro Development Fund should be created to find resources for public sector projects.

(c) and (d). Based on the recommendations made by the Committee, a National policy on hydro power development will be evolved by the Central Government which inter-alia would include development of mega hydro projects, both in the public sector and the private secto, at locations with substantial hydro potential.

Amendment of Indian Electricity Act

2113. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL : Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to amend the Indian Electricity Act to facilitate the private investment in power transmission/distribution etc;